

a war. But relying on new systems before they are battle tested leaves troops feeling they have less margin for error.

Shortfalls appear to be more serious in the Persian Gulf, where a rematch with Iraq would probably come with more advance warning—but still be bloody. A radar operator who has worked at an airfield in Kuwait says there are no longer any backups for the facility's radar, the only ground-based system available for tracking nearby aircraft, including enemy planes. "We're a forward operating unit and we still don't get what we need," he says. "When that baby goes down and you realize there's no backup, you start saying, 'Where is the priority?'"

Troops' morale, an intangible but essential ingredient of success in combat, can weather temporary problems. But persistent shortages and seemingly never-ending commitments take a toll. "Troops don't understand why, if what they do is so important, they don't give us the tools to do it," says Lt. Col. Michael Snodgrass, commander of the 69th Fighter Squadron at Moody Air Force Base. Enthusiasm suffers first. Before Desert Storm, says Col. Billy Diehl, acting commander of Moody's 347th Wing, the Air Force's annual Red Flag aerial combat exercise "was the highlight of the year." But in 1996, when he arrived at Moody, "everybody was thrilled that it was canceled."

A more important casualty is confidence. A C-130 pilot says that due to training cutbacks, "My own skills are nowhere near where they were. Some of the new guys, I'm deathly afraid to go to war with them. They just don't have the training." John Stillion, a former Air Force navigator and Rand analyst, says that on a recent visit to an Air Force base, morale was "far worse than I've ever seen it. I'm amazed at how bitter they sounded."

Surprisingly, few in the military—which studies show is overwhelmingly conservative today—feel the solution is to withdraw from its peacekeeping missions in the world's trouble spots. One typical Army colonel strongly objects to the political gamesmanship of setting unrealistic deadlines for troop adjustments in places such as Bosnia. But nonetheless, he believes U.S. troops should be there: "It is appropriate use of the military, mainly because nobody else can do it."

Some practical steps could help strike a better balance between preparing for war and preserving peace. Many in the Army would like to see the National Guard shoulder more of the burden for peacekeeping. Rand researchers and others argue that a more modular structure would make the Army much more flexible. Ideas include self-supporting combat groups of about 5,000 troops—one third the size of a division—or discrete support units that can each carry out a variety of functions, instead of specializing in transportation or engineering. Some in the Air Force are pushing a "cop on the beat" approach, enforcing no-fly zones with random patrols, augmented by sensors that detect air and ground movements.

But what America's troops crave most is a clear message from their leaders stating the purpose of U.S. forces. Are they warriors, whose main job is to fight and win wars? Or police assigned to prop up struggling nations and keep the world safe for American commerce? If U.S. forces must fulfill both roles, how can they do each well? Many members of the military believe that before those questions can be answered, there needs to be greater awareness of what U.S. troops accomplish by being everywhere they are—and what risks are involved in spreading them ever thinner. "We need a better understanding among the American public that we have interests outside the United States," says Lt. Gen. Joseph Hurd, commander of the 7th

Air Force in South Korea. Once those interests are sorted out, it wouldn't hurt to inform the troops in the ranks, either.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HUTCHINSON). The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE BUDGET SURPLUS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, as we reconvene today for the second session of the 105th Congress, there is important work ahead of us. I am certain my colleagues join me in acknowledging that regardless of the headlines and the commotion that is going on outside this chamber, the Senate cannot be distracted from its responsibility to carry out the will of the people. America's families, its taxpayers, have great expectations of us, and we must not let them down. So I look forward to what we can accomplish together on their behalf.

I have to admit, though, that I have mixed feelings about the session ahead of us. I think Will Rogers explained my predicament best when he said, "This country has come to feel the same when Congress is in session as when the baby gets hold of a hammer."

When the baby finds the hammer, somebody almost always gets hit over the head. In 1998, the "hammer" is the much-anticipated budget surplus, and I am afraid it may very well be the taxpayers who get whacked by it.

Earlier this month, the Congressional Budget Office projected that the federal deficit would decline sharply this year from its original estimate of \$125 billion to \$5 billion. It also forecast a \$14 billion surplus in 2001 and a total of \$665 billion in surpluses by the end of the next decade.

Now, tax dollars are always considered "free money" by the big spenders here in Washington, and the thought of all that new "free money" is creating a feeding frenzy here on Capitol Hill. The rush to spend is like something right off the Discovery Channel, like the free-for-all that results when a pack of hungry predators gets hold of a piece of raw meat. A ravenous creature in its own right, Washington will attack a pile of tax dollars and spend, spend, spend until it is all gone—until the bones have been stripped of every last morsel of meat.

Mr. President, with all due respect to my colleagues in both chambers, I am disgusted by this "stampede to spend," and angry that it is being championed on both sides of the political aisle. I am a Republican, elected by the people of Minnesota to carry out my promise to lower their taxes and rein in a federal government that has grown out of control. Republicans gained control of Congress because we are the champions of the taxpayers—the American people trusted us to carry out our promise

when we said, "Elect a Republican majority and we will help you build a better life for yourselves and families by curbing Washington's impulse to spend your precious tax dollars."

They certainly did not elect Republicans thinking we would build a bigger, more expensive government the first chance we got.

Not only are we rushing to join the spending stampede, but we are doing it before the budget is actually balanced, before a surplus actually exists, before even a single surplus dollar makes its way into the federal treasury.

If this is a race to prove who can be the most "compassionate" with the taxpayers' dollars, it is a race nobody is going to win, and one the taxpayers most certainly will lose. When is Washington going to understand that you cannot buy compassion? And Washington cannot give something to Americans, without taking more from Americans. I hear the big spenders say that Americans are struggling so Washington needs to do more. And "more" always means taking more from Americans so Washington can control, shape, and direct our families and our lives.

Who is going to stand up in this chamber for the taxpayers if the Republicans will not? If our party is abandoning our commitment to fiscal responsibility—the commitment that built a congressional majority—we are abandoning the taxpayers as well. And do not think the taxpayers have not noticed. One of my constituents, Dale Rook of Beardsley, Minnesota, summed up the feelings of many in a recent letter: "It appears that the Democrats are still in control of both Houses of Congress," he wrote. "Why? What has happened to the Republican Party?" he wrote. A lot of us are asking that very same question.

Of course, the Republicans do not have a monopoly here when it comes to spending. I am deeply troubled by what is happening on Capitol Hill among both parties, and every taxpayer ought to be as well. And as a Senator representing the nation's families—America's hard-working, taxpaying families—I pledge that they will not be forgotten.

Let me speak specifically about the deficit and the anticipated surplus. Both Congress and the President have rushed to claim the credit for the decline in the federal deficit. Mr. President, I think we should give credit where credit is due. In this case, the credit really belongs to the robust American economy and the working Americans who propel it. And Washington should not be allowed to take that away from American families, workers, and business. Washington should not gain more control of our spending.

The economy, not any government action, has produced this unprecedented revenue windfall. These unexpected dollars have come directly from working Americans—taxes paid by corporations, individuals and investors. If the economy continues to generate 8

percent revenue growth as in recent years, we could soon enjoy unified budget surpluses.

However, Mr. President, we must remember this is a surplus only under a unified budget. That means Social Security surpluses that the government borrowed to pay its bills are also counted in the projection. Payroll taxes from the current generation of workers provides far more money than is needed to finance benefits for today's retirees; the extra money is used for other government programs. Without borrowing from the Social Security trust funds, the real federal deficit could be \$116 billion, rather than a \$14 billion surplus in 2001. In fact, the total deficit will be nearly a trillion in the next ten years. This means we will see deficits, not surpluses, as far as the eye can see.

In any event, if the budget surpluses, indeed, occur, with or without Social Security borrowing, the question of how to apply these surpluses remains critical. In my view, the right way to use any potential budget surplus is to return those funds to working Americans and their children in the form of meaningful tax relief, national debt reduction, and channeling them toward solutions to our long-term financial imbalances, thus ensuring our economy continues to grow. Since the unexpected revenue has come directly from working Americans, it is only fair to return it to them. Despite the first, tentative steps we took last year toward real tax reform for families, the tax burden on the American people is still historically high. It is sound policy to use part of the surpluses to lower the tax burden and allow families to keep a little more of their hard-earned money.

Over the past 30 years, we have amassed a \$5.5 trillion national debt thanks to Washington's culture of spending. A newborn child today will bear about \$20,000 of that debt the moment he or she comes into the world. Each year, we sink more \$250 billion into the black hole of interest payments, which could be better spent fighting crime, maintaining roads and bridges, and equipping the military. It is sound policy to use part of any surpluses to begin paying down the national debt and reducing the financial burden on the next generations.

The budget surpluses also give us a great opportunity to address our other long-term financial imbalances. Federal unfunded liabilities could eventually top \$14 trillion, bankrupting our government if no real reform occurs. It is vitally important that we use the budget surpluses to finance these reforms, not to try to buy popularity—spending in the name of compassion and need, while putting our entire futures at financial risk.

If we fail to fix these long-term fiscal time bombs, the federal deficit could come back and haunt us in a catastrophic way, shattering the health of our future economy and placing an un-

bearable burden on our children and grandchildren. According to the CBO, the federal deficit would increase to \$11 trillion and the national debt would balloon to \$91 billion in 2035 without substantial entitlement reform.

Some of my colleagues have suggested that we put the surpluses into the Social Security trust funds. I generally agree that we should build real assets for the trust funds by returning borrowed Social Security surplus into it. But our Social Security system is in serious financial trouble—a fiscal disaster-in-the-making that is not sustainable in its present form as the Senator from New Hampshire outlined a few minutes ago. Simply funneling money back into a broken system will not help fix the problem. It will not build the real assets of the funds for current and future beneficiaries and it does not address the flaws of the current pay-as-you-go finance mechanism. Without fundamental reform, the system will consume all the surpluses and go broke. Using the budget surpluses to build real assets by changing the system from pay-go to pre-funded is the right way to go.

The wrong way is to spend all those dollars on new government programs, which is exactly what President Clinton has proposed to do, even before a surplus is realized. The President has recklessly planned to expand Medicare, rather than reforming it to preserve it from soon going broke. He is also seeking a \$22 billion increase in child-care expenditures and subsidies. This is after Washington increased child care expenditures by 500% in the last two years, going from \$4 billion to \$20 billion a year just one year ago. Although I think it is good to bring tax credits back to the table, it is wrong for Washington to control daycare for American families. The President also wants to throw more money into federal education programs for local schools without addressing the real problems of the system. And advocating Washington take more control of education rather than State and local governments and local school boards.

Despite the President's rhetoric that the era of big government is over, President Clinton, with the help of congressional spenders, has made it even bigger. Actual annual government spending has increased from \$1.3 trillion to \$1.6 trillion since Mr. Clinton took the White House, adding over \$1.2 trillion to the national debt.

Even under the '97 budget agreement, spending will increase to nearly \$1.9 trillion in 2002, a growth of 18 percent over 1992 levels. Is there any sign of leaner government anywhere? No. Like the overweight diner who lunches on lettuce and peaches with the family then sneaks a pint of ice cream once the kitchen lights have been turned off, the enablers of big government profess their new-found fiscal restraint but hungrily pounce on your tax dollars at the first opportunity.

We must never, never, never repeat the mistake we made in 1997. If you

will remember, as soon as the CBO discovered a \$225 billion revenue windfall that "might" be received by the federal government in the next six years, Congress and the President spent all of it, to expand existing programs and create new programs. Not a penny is left. Few wasteful and unnecessary programs were eliminated. The savings we achieved through welfare reform are almost completely wiped out.

If the budget surpluses are not returned to the American people in the form of debt reduction or tax relief, I am absolutely certain Congress and President Clinton will spend them all for new and expanded government programs. When it is paid for by the taxpayers, Washington has never been able to resist raiding the freezer for that late-night pint of ice cream.

Listen to what the people are saying. A Time/CNN poll conducted in mid January reveals that most Americans—78 percent of them—believe that spending the budget surplus to reduce the national debt should be a top priority. Sixty-eight percent also favored using the surplus to cut federal income taxes.

I'm hearing that same message in the calls, faxes, letters, and e-mails I have received this month. Here are the words of Mark Keppel of Minneapolis:

I want you to know how strongly your constituency feel that you do not allow those feeding at the taxpayer trough to waste this opportunity to reduce our huge current debt burden.

These tax collections are over-collections of our money, and we wish to either reduce our outstanding debt or have this surplus returned to us, not reallocated to new, unfunded projects. Can that be any clearer?

Brian Tice, a 27-year-old constituent of mine from Anoka, was equally clear. "If our country is bankrupted," he wrote, "my lifetime of savings and my retirement will go down with it. I encourage you to stand firm against those . . . who will pressure you into spending the surplus on social and special interest programs."

After hundreds of billions of new spending and over a trillion in new debts, President Clinton announced on January 5th that he will submit a balanced budget to Congress for the 1999 fiscal year. I am encouraged by his announcement. I welcome the President's intention to balance the budget. But why wait another year?

The robust economy has offered us a historic opportunity to finally put our fiscal house in order. We should, and can, balance the budget this year by trimming just a few wasteful government-spending programs.

Compared to nearly \$1.7 trillion in annual government spending, a \$5 billion spending cut is peanuts. And if we can achieve it, it will balance the federal budget for the first time since 1969, and think of the positive impact it would have on our economy. That is why my colleagues, Senators BROWNBACK, INHOFE, ASHCROFT, ALLARD, HUTCHINSON and myself sent a letter to the congressional leadership

early this month, urging Congress and the President to work together to achieve a balanced budget this year, rather than the next year, by rescinding \$5 billion from the 1998 budget.

More importantly, the sooner we balance our budget the less pain we will suffer in the future. As I said earlier, the long-term fiscal time bombs we are facing require that we take action quickly. Escalating Social Security and Medicare costs pose the primary threat to the federal government's long-term solvency. We have only ten-year's time to fix Social Security. If it is mishandled, millions of Americans could suffer. Medicare is already in a horrific situation. It has accumulated over a trillion-dollar deficit and will soon be broke. Immediate action has to be taken to preserve and improve it.

There are trillions of other federal unfunded liabilities that we cannot ignore. These include entitlement programs other than Social Security and Medicare: federal civilian and military pensions, railroad retirement benefits, federal insurance programs, bank deposit insurance, private pension insurance, and a huge portfolio of guaranteed loans, environmental cleanup, and deferred maintenance and life-cycle costs for equipment and infrastructure—all of which have some risk of going sour and costing the government substantial sums down the road.

If we balance the budget this year, it will give us a little more time and a little more flexibility to focus on and fix these long-term financial liabilities.

Mr. President, I began this statement by quoting Will Rogers. As I conclude, let me quote him once again:

There is not a man in the country that cannot make a living for himself and family. But he cannot make a living for them and his government, too, the way his government is living. What the government has got to do is live as cheap as the people.

Our immediate task should be to regain the confidence of the American people by achieving a balanced budget and keeping it balanced by shrinking the size of the government. That is, by asking government to live as cheap as the people. By doing so, we will reduce interest rates, increase national savings, create more jobs, provide more meaningful tax cuts, and generate more revenues. More importantly, we will shrink the financial burden for our children and grandchildren.

As the Senate meets today to open the second session of the 105th Congress, I urge my colleagues to recall the promises they have made to the American taxpayers. Embrace those promises, and put the needs and desires of the people ahead of the impulse to leave a legacy of compassion—a legacy that could bury the taxpayers if left unchecked. Let us work with the President to achieve a balanced budget this year and begin a new era of government accountability.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 8 minutes as in morning business, to be followed immediately by my colleague, Senator ALLARD, for 8 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. CAMPBELL. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. CAMPBELL and Mr. ALLARD pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 166 and S. Res. 167 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

#### DARTON COLLEGE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize an outstanding institution in my home state of Georgia, Darton College.

Recently, I was contacted by one of the school's students who wrote to express his pride and support of his school and the educational opportunity that he is being provided. Mr. President, it is my belief that the finest accolade a school can receive is the praise of its students and, in turn, their success.

There are many battles on the American playing field each day, in the business world, political world, the judicial world, but none can be more important than those being fought in the classrooms of our learning institutions. Because, after all, our nation depends on these educational institutions to provide us with the necessary tools to win the other battles we encounter in our lifetime.

Mr. President, with that in mind, I would like to express my support for continued success and prosperity for past, current and future students, faculty and staff of Darton College.

#### 1997 FALL PAGES

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, when the first session of the 105th Congress ended last November, a group of young men and women also ended their term as United States Senate Pages. Today, I rise on behalf of the Senate to say "thank you" to these young people.

Pages are an integral part of our daily life here in the Senate, and I salute them for their tireless service, and would like to express the appreciation of the Senate for their fine work.

Many people, Senators included, may not fully appreciate the rigorous nature of page life. Their daily routine is not an easy one, and is one that begins early each morning. Senate pages rise early in order to attend classes. Upon concluding class work, the pages make their way to the Capitol to prepare for the day's session. Preparing the Senate Chamber for a day's session entails securing and placing on each Senator's desk the appropriate legislative documents that will be under discussion during the session, as well as securing supplemental documents that become available throughout the day.

Pages are on the go constantly, and are called upon to perform a variety of tasks—in addition to their tasks associated with preparing the Senate chamber for daily sessions. These might include obtaining documents requested by individual Senators, running errands between the Capitol and the Senate office buildings, as well as assisting Cloakroom personnel at the regularly scheduled conference luncheons.

Once the Senate has concluded business for the day, the pages return to their dorm and prepare for the next day's classes and, we hope, get some much-needed sleep. While a day in the life of a page is filled from morning to night, each page continually discharges his or her tasks efficiently and cheerfully.

In the first session of the 105th Congress, these young people witnessed the enactment of a balanced budget agreement ironed out between the Administration and the Congress that will soon result in a balanced budget. This historic event was the result of months of negotiations and required both sides, Democrats and Republicans, to be willing to accede on policy issues of importance to each side—the give and take of the legislative process.

Mr. President, our country's future lies with the generation of those young people who sit to the left and right of the Presiding officer.

I hope that some of what the pages have witnessed here will inspire them to pursue a career of public service. As they have returned to their hometowns, perhaps they have taken with them an appreciation and better understanding of our system of government and the importance of the legislative process. Perhaps in the years ahead, one or more of that group will return here to serve as members of the Senate.

Again, I say goodbye to the pages and hope that they all enjoyed their experience in the United States Senate. Speaking on behalf of my Democratic colleagues and all members of the Senate, we wish for them a bright and successful future.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the names of the 1997 Fall Senate pages be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the names were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### 1997 FALL PAGES

##### REPUBLICANS

Adamson, Justin, Idaho.  
Austin, Chesley, Vermont.  
Bowers, Jackson, South Carolina.  
Brown, Sarah, New Hampshire.  
Dorn, Lauren, South Carolina.  
Grade, Renee, Washington.  
Holson, William, Delaware.  
Jaussi, Richard, Utah.  
Johnson, Junior, South Carolina.  
Martira, Nancy, Rhode Island.  
Maurer, Michelle, Arkansas.  
McFerron, Ben, Maryland.  
Moody, Justin, Alaska.  
Ordner, David, Indiana.  
Parker, Marisa, Mississippi.  
Satcher, Bess, South Carolina.